

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

March 15, 2022

9:03 a.m.

9:03:57 AM

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Bishop called the Senate Finance Committee meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Click Bishop, Co-Chair  
Senator Bert Stedman, Co-Chair  
Senator Lyman Hoffman  
Senator Donny Olson  
Senator Natasha von Imhof  
Senator Bill Wielechowski  
Senator David Wilson

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ALSO PRESENT

Erin Shine, Staff, Senator Click Bishop; Ed King, Staff, Senator Roger Holland; Heidi Teshner, Director, Finance and Support Services, Department of Education and Early Development.

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

Susan McKenzie, Director of Innovation and Educational Excellence, Department of Education and Early Development, Wasilla.

SUMMARY

SB 111 EARLY EDUCATION; READING INTERVENTION

SB 111 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

#sb111

SENATE BILL NO. 111

"An Act relating to the duties of the Department of Education and Early Development; relating to public schools; relating to early education programs; relating to funding for early education programs; relating to school age eligibility; relating to reports by the Department of Education and Early Development; relating to reports by school districts; relating to certification and competency of teachers; relating to assessing reading deficiencies and providing reading intervention services to public school students enrolled in grades kindergarten through three; relating to textbooks and materials for reading intervention services; establishing a reading program in the Department of Education and Early Development; relating to school operating funds; relating to a virtual education consortium; and providing for an effective date."

[9:05:01 AM](#)

Co-Chair Stedman MOVED to ADOPT the committee substitute for SB 111, Work Draft 32-LS0485\E (Klein, 3/14/22).

Co-Chair Bishop OBJECTED for discussion.

[9:05:21 AM](#)

ERIN SHINE, STAFF, SENATOR CLICK BISHOP, gave an overview of the work done to draft the committee substitute. She discussed the Explanation of Changes (copy on file):

Updated Title

Section 13 AS 14.03.120(i)

Page 8, line 12-18

Adds a new subsection (i) to require better access to data.

Section 15 AS 14.07.020(a)

Adds to the department's general duties section the responsibilities to:

Approve programs for the pre-k grants (previously in Section 14).

Convene an annual panel (previously in Section 33). Version E expands the panel to include reviewing regulations of programs created by this Act and requiring representation from across the state.

Section 20 AS 14.07.165(a)(5)(B)(i)  
Provides pre-k teachers more time to complete required course work from one year to two years.

Section 33 AS 14.30.760

Changes "screening or assessment tool" to "screening tool" to remove any misunderstanding regarding the level of effort required to comply with the bill's intent.

Clarifies that the department should assist districts in creating alternative screening tools and that the screener can be for any language.  
Conforming and technical changes made throughout version E

AS 14.30.765

Repurposes the good cause waiver to be a tool for districts to use when parents are not participating in progression decisions.  
Conforming and technical changes made throughout version E

AS 14.30.770

Removes the cap on participating schools for the reading program and leaves it up to the budgeting process to create position to serve this need.

Ensures that department employees going to work in rural communities have the correct training to so effectively.

AS 14.30.775

Requires the department, by regulation, to develop a definition of "dyslexia" as given by the International Dyslexia Association.

Section 35 AS 14.60.010

Defines "parent" or "guardian" and applies it to be a title-wide definition (previously in Section 34)

Section 37 Repealed Sections

Adds 14.03.290(4) (definition of parent in charter school statutes) to the repealed sections.

Conforming to changes in Section 35

Section 44 Effective Date

Adds an immediate effective date for Section 43.

Section 45 Effective Date

Amends effective moved from July 1, 2022 to July 1, 2023

Deleted sections from version N

Sections 27 and 28

This is the operating fund change that is no longer necessary

Senator Olson wondered whether any of the changes could be considered "unfunded mandates."

Ms. Shine did not believe so, but deferred to the bill sponsor.

[9:11:08 AM](#)

ED KING, STAFF, SENATOR ROGER HOLLAND, replied that the changes did not impose any heavy burdens on the school districts than the original bill version.

Senator Wielechowski looked at page 40, Section 45, and remarked that there were a number of sections that had an sunset date of June 30, 2034, and wondered whether that was correct.

Ms. Shine replied that it was unchanged from the previous version, and almost all sections were repealed in approximately ten years from the effective date.

Co-Chair Bishop WITHDREW the OBJECTION. There being NO further OBJECTION, the proposed committee substitute was ADOPTED.

[9:13:00 AM](#)

SUSAN MCKENZIE, DIRECTOR OF INNOVATION AND EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT, WASILLA (via teleconference), introduced herself.

Co-Chair Bishop wondered whether the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) had examined any alternative funding methods.

[9:13:36 AM](#)

HEIDI TESHNER, DIRECTOR, FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT, replied that the bill had already utilized some of the COVID relief funding. She stated that updated fiscal notes would examine other ability to use COVID funding for bill implementation.

Senator von Imhof looked at Section 45, which stated that the act took effect on June 30, 2034, and remarked that Senator Wielechowski had already posed that question.

SB 111 was HEARD and HELD in committee for further consideration.

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ADJOURNMENT

[9:15:20 AM](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 a.m.